



May 13, 2019

Owl Post

The official weekly newsletter
of Louisa Boren STEM K-8 PTA

Upcoming Events

May 27

Memorial Day – NO SCHOOL

May 31

Spirit Wear Day

Pride Gear OK!

STEM K-8

May 31

GGLOW Owls Family Dance Party

5:30pm-7:30pm

STEM Playground

More information in this Owl Post

June 6

Spring Band/Choir Concert

6:00pm-8:00pm

Chief Sealth Auditorium

June 12

Talent Show (5pm) & Juneteenth Celebration

June 13

PTA Meeting & Volunteer Appreciation Night

6:00pm-6:30pm Volunteer Appreciation

6:30-8:00pm PTA Meeting

STEM Library

June 20

Spring PBL Night

6:00-7:00pm K-5

6:30-7:30pm Middle School

STEM Library

June 20

Spirit Wear Day

STEM K-8

A Note from Principal Ben Ostrom

Hope you all got out and enjoyed some sun this weekend! Nothing like an opportunity to watch STEM K-8 middle school soccer, volleyball, or ultimate frisbee on a sunny day! Thanks also to all of you who contributed to last week's staff appreciation treats and activities. We felt appreciated!

This week we will start the Smarter Balance Assessments (SBA) for 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders. 3rd and 4th grade will take the SBA language arts assessments on Monday and Tuesday, and 5th grade will test on Wednesday and Friday.

Please make sure your children arrive at school on time and rested, ready to do their best—we start the assessments first thing in the morning. Help your child understand that although the SBA is a significant assessment, it represents one small part of their overall performance. It's used along with many other indicators to evaluate progress. SBA results do not determine whether or not a student is ready for the next grade! The SBA can be viewed as a worthy challenge rather than a worrisome barrier. Students have an opportunity to practice important test-taking skills and show some of what they know relative to national standards.

In light of inaccurate reporting by local media, Seattle Public Schools is providing information related to the K-12 science adoption process to both inform the community and to clarify any misconceptions and inaccuracies that have been reported. Additional information is also available on the [science department webpage](#). If you have been following or are interested in the current science adoption process a detailed description of the process and answers to different questions are included at the end of the Owl Post.

*Ben Ostrom
Principal
Louisa Boren STEM K-8*

June 25

All school field trip to Lincoln Park

June 25

8th Grade Graduation
6:00-7:00pm
STEM Gym

June 26

Field Day
STEM

June 27

Last Day of School!
2:25pm 1-hour early dismissal

Check out the school calendar [here](#).

SPED @ STEM | May 15th 6:30-7:30pm

SPED@STEM meeting Wednesday May 15th in the school library from 6:30-7:30. Families of students with IEP's & 504's or those seeking additional resources and support for their students are welcome to attend.

Bike to School Day was a Success!

Louisa Boren STEM K-8 had a fun and well attended bike train for Bike to School Day on Wednesday, May 8! The event started with a pre-ride raffle for some cool prizes including t-shirts featuring the new STEM walk and bike to school logo. School principal Ben Ostrom joined the bike train as students, parents, and teachers pedaled, scooted, and jogged to school along the 26th Ave SW greenway and Longfellow Creek trail. All the students were rewarded for their efforts at the completion of the ride with a gift card to Menchie's frozen yogurt shop. Great effort by everyone!





Read and Return! Read and Return! Read and Return!
Let's be responsible library users and return our ALL books this year!



Library Book Policies Reminder and End of Year Due Dates

STEM students are great readers! Let's get all library materials returned on time so that other students may enjoy them. If your family is doing some Spring cleaning, it is a great opportunity to look for overdue library books. Students may return library books these ways:

1. in the tubs on carts at their classroom on the day of their library visit each week,
2. any time the school is open in the green tub inside the library door.

Library Due Dates:

All library materials are officially due for students in two weeks. However, generally students return their books weekly on the day of their class visit. If students need books for research for a longer period of time, they just need to put a post it on the returned book that says renew and inform Mrs. B by putting it in the RENEW crate on their library cart so that the materials may be renewed.

READ! READ! READ! READ! READ! and then RETURN!

Library Fines: Thank you for being responsible library patrons returning items on time. Students and staff are not charged for late books. However, **patrons with overdue materials may not check out any additional items until the overdue materials are returned.**

Significantly overdue books will be converted to fines at which time the family may either pay the fine or replace the book with the exact title and binding. Unfortunately, there is no process for refunds of fines due to district financial policies which do not enable us to maintain a petty cash fund. READ! READ! READ! READ! READ! and RETURN!

End of Year Library Due Dates: All library materials must be returned by **9:00 am Friday, June 7th**. Then students may check out one book at a time until a final due date of Friday, June 14th. At that time, any outstanding books are converted to **fines which should be paid prior to end of the year activities** or as stated above the student may replace the book with the exact title and binding.

On **Tuesday, June 25th**, those students that haven't returned their materials or paid their fines will have a meeting at the start of their field day to come up with a plan for how to resolve their outstanding materials/fines.

READ! READ! READ! READ! READ! and then RETURN! READ! READ! READ! READ! READ! and RETURN!

Please talk with Mrs. B if you have any questions.

THANKS! mebannister@seattleschools.org 206 252-8476

GGLOW OWLS Family Dance Party | May 31st 5:30-7:30pm

Thanks to those who purchased the new 2019 GGLOW OWLS t-shirt. The campaign has ended and shirts will be shipped soon. Two GGLOW OWLS designs will be made available soon on our school's Cafe Press account. Stay tuned!

If you'd like to volunteer at GGLOW OWLS Family Dance Party, email Shawna Murphy southernstreetkids@yahoo.com or just show up at 5:00pm on the day of the event to lend a hand setting up. Clean up help at 7:30pm is also very welcome!



Friday — May 31st — 5:30-7:30

Fancy dance party attire, pride gear, or come as you are!

Allies, family...everyone welcome!!

Admission is free but bring cash for treats by Phorale & Full Tilt.



Accepting donations to help build STEM's GGLOW Owl LGBTQ+ Library!

Must accompany your owls. No drop offs.

Brought to you by the PTA Advocacy Committee



PE Department announcements

1. Field Day will be Wednesday, June 26. Parents are invited to come join their children during the day. The schedule will be as follows:
 - 9:00am – 10:30am ---- Kindergarten – 2nd grade
 - 10:40am – 12:10pm ---- 3rd grade – 5th grade
 - 12:20pm – 1:50pm ---- Middle School (6th grade – 8th grade)

Activities are being finalized and we should have an opportunity for volunteers to help soon. We will encourage parents to volunteer on shifts that do not include their child if possible.

2. Hello STEM parents,

We are reaching out to let everyone know what is planned for the rest of the PE year. Included in the intermediate curriculum is soccer, speedway, pickleball, tennis, frisbee, frisbee golf, circuit training, softball/whiffle ball/kickball, with heart health. These subjects collectively help the intermediate students demonstrate things such as offensive and defensive strategies in games, combination skills, and complex skills. Upper primary students can demonstrate complex skills with extensions in each sports' skills base. With the help of equipment this will include striking, throwing, moving, and cooperation games. For the lower primary grades everything will be broken down even further, with the help of available equipment, and similar concepts focused on locomotor skills such as jumping, skipping, hopping, striking, etc. Equipment and weather will determine the final sequence of the curriculum covered. There will be required state PE assessments which coincide with the five components of fitness. This will be assessed and recorded using fitness gram measures. All of this will satisfy the core locomotor, manipulative, and non-manipulative extensions for varying grade levels.

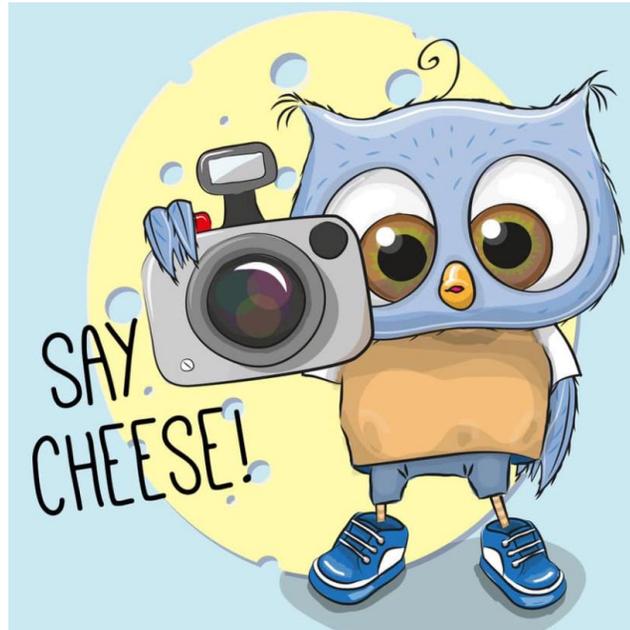
Thank you for your continued support. If there are any questions, comments, or concerns please feel free to contact a PE teacher.

Respectfully,

Matt Schiavo & Tim Avery

Volunteer Needed!

Looking for a volunteer photographer for 8th grade graduation ceremony June 25th 6-8pm-ish. Can you donate your talent? Only digital upload would be needed that we would then send to families. Thanks for considering! Please email Robin at robingraham26@gmail.com.



Stay Connected

[PTA Website](#) – all things PTA (become a member, volunteer, shop and earn, how YOU can be involved).

[STEM K-8 school website](#) – our SPS school website (curriculum, staff details and more).

[STEM K-8 Facebook](#)



[STEM PTA Twitter](#)



[Principal Ostrom's Twitter](#)



[Principal Ostrom's Blog](#)



Saturday, May 18

Varsity Boys Soccer - Playoffs

Check with your team on location/time

Games start at 8:00am at Memorial Stadium & Eagle Staff

JV Boys Soccer

11:00am Blaine v. STEM

Location: Ingraham

Varsity Girls Volleyball

STEM – BYE Week

JV Girls Volleyball

12:30pm STEM v. Hazel Wolf

Location: Eagle Staff



Incoming K families can join the Facebook Group "Kindergarten Class - Incoming Fall 2019!"

A space to ask questions, set up play dates, meet new friends, and get ready for this next new adventure! Click [HERE](#) to join!



SPS Science Adoption Update

Why is the SPS science materials adoption necessary for our students?

Equitable access to instructional materials that promote modern teaching practices, align with the Next Generation Science Standards, and support **all** students' achievement is the driving force of the science materials adoption process.

The most recent K-5 science curriculum adoption in SPS occurred 24 years ago and 17 years ago at grades 6-8. No high school science materials have ever been officially adopted by the district. Since the last science adoptions, technology, engineering, scientific knowledge, and science teaching practices have undergone dramatic innovation and change.

In response to the lack of updated, standards-aligned science curricula, schools with heavy PTSA financial involvement have been able to purchase supplemental materials for their schools. Schools with this level of PTSA investment tend to also have fewer students experiencing poverty and lower teacher turnover. Some schools have also been able to purchase from their building-based budget, but not all schools.

This practice has resulted in highly varied instructional resources, in both quality and quantity, across our district. This patchwork of disjointed and supplemental science curricula is not sustainable at a systems level and, most importantly, is profoundly inequitable for Seattle Public School's historically underserved students. As a result of this inequitable access to science instructional materials, low-income students and students of color are far less likely to be prepared for high-school level science courses, as evidenced by the achievement gaps in SPS between white students and students of color reported at grades 5, 8, and 11.

The district's new 5-year Strategic Plan calls for every Seattle Public Schools' student to receive a high-quality, world-class education, and to graduate prepared for college, career, and community. The Board-adopted plan mandates that all departments in SPS ensure racial equity in our educational system. The adoption of **foundational** science instructional materials at grades K-12 will ensure high quality, board approved resources are available to all students regardless of school assignment or zip code.

Is there a state assessment for science?

Last spring, the State of Washington began testing students' mastery of content and skills found in the Next Generation Science Standards. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) launched the Washington Comprehensive Assessment of Science (WCAS) at grades 5, 8, and 11, a statewide assessment. **The test is entirely computer-based and all test items are digitally interactive.** The test assesses students' proficiency of science principles in the new standards and the eight engineering and science practice skills, as well as the seven crosscutting concepts.

What is a science curriculum adoption process?

It is part of SPS Policy No. 2015, “Selection & Adoption of Instructional Materials.” An Instructional Materials Committee creates a representative Adoption Committee for each specific adoption (e.g. elementary science). In the case of science, the three adoption committees consisted of teachers, professors, scientists, and families. It is a thorough process that solicits input from the community on their opinions and values about instructional materials. After the Adoption Committee completes its review, the Committee is directed to recommend instructional materials for adoption to the School Board. Typically, the committee presents a single candidate for recommendation. The 2018-19 Science Adoption is scheduled for introduction to the board on May 15.

How many adoptions committees were there? How were SPS teachers involved?

The 2018-19 Science Adoption engaged three committees, one for K-5, one for 6-8, and one for 9-12. In all, 90 teachers, parents, scientists and engineers contributed more than 70 hours each to help determine the finalists for field testing.

How was the adoption committee selected?

SPS Communications and SPS science broadly announced the opportunity to participate on the Science Adoption Committee. The announcements were broadcast via parent email, the public website, social media, community networks and organizations, and personal communication via teachers and building administrators.

ALL interested individuals who applied to participate were invited to become a committee member. Committee membership at all three grade bands included individuals from Science teaching, English Language Learners, Special Education, Advanced Learning, STEM industry professionals, representatives from institutions of higher learning, families, and Seattle’s diverse community.

How were materials tested and evaluated?

Each adoption process runs through four stages including initial review, community input, field testing, and review against a rigorous rubric prior to School Board approval and implementation. That entire process is about 14 months. The field-testing process included 62 teachers who served as field test leads, engaging more than 3,800 students. Extensive data was gathered during the field testing. Each instructional material was reviewed against a rigorous rubric that aligns to the Next Generation Science Standards. The finalist candidate for board action was determined through a committee analysis of the rubric, the field test, and community input. It is the adoption committee, not the SPS Science Manager or staff, that determines which curriculum candidate is selected for recommendation of approval for adoption by the

School Board, as outlined in board policy 2015 You can read more about the [Adoption Process and Timeline here](#).

How are instructional materials selected for consideration by the Adoption Committee?

As per board policy, SPS Purchasing Department sends a formal notice of the anticipated adoption to the Washington-Oregon-Alaska Textbook Representatives Association roster and any other publishers who have requested notification. The publishers are invited to submit materials to the Instruction Materials Office for evaluation.

A recent media story questioned the process related to the committee's AmplifyScience recommendation. Below is background information and details on the process.

Who Created AmplifyScience?

AmplifyScience was developed by UC Berkeley's Lawrence Hall of Science and the digital learning team at Amplify. Lawrence Hall has been developing science curriculum since the 1970's and also authored FOSS and SEPUP science curricula, both of which were part of the original science adoptions at SPS and have been in use in grades K-8 in SPS for decades. AmplifyScience is Lawrence Hall's first curriculum designed to address the new science standards.

Why is AmplifyScience currently in use in several SPS middle schools? Who approves the use of instructional waivers in SPS?

When a school determines that currently adopted curriculum materials do not meet the needs of its students or programs, the school's principal may apply to waive the use of currently adopted materials so that non-adopted materials can be used. This is a common practice at SPS and at districts nationwide. (Instructional Materials waivers are currently in use in SPS for Math, ELA, and other subjects, at all grade bands.) In SPS, building principals first submit instructional waiver applications to the required district personnel, including the Superintendent, for approval in accordance with Board Policy 2020.

In 2016, with no science curriculum adoption scheduled for the future, science teacher representatives from all SPS middle schools formed an alignment team and began meeting to align the outdated adopted science curriculum with the Next Generation Science Standards, which were adopted by Washington State in fall of 2013. Recognizing that it was not realistic to align standards by revising 15-year-old curriculum, the alignment team began exploring several alternatives supported by Board Policy 2020, and their schools' ability to offer supplemental or alternative curricula if approved through a formal waiver process.

Together, in January 2017, the alignment team identified Amplify instructional materials as an option to be used with the appropriate Board mandated instructional materials waiver. In March 2017, alignment team members asked their building principals to submit a three-year instructional waiver application, as outlined in Board Policy 2020 and Board Policy 2020SP, for their respective schools at some or all grade levels. This resulted in 16 of the 22 SPS middle school principals submitting formal instructional material waivers, which were approved by the former Superintendent.

How did SPS obtain Amplify for use as instructional waiver materials?

Amplify provided the program subscriptions (the digital portion) for free to SPS. SPS used existing resources to provide schools with the workbooks and kits (labs).

Is there a relationship between the waivers use of Amplify and the fact that Amplify became a candidate for adoption?

No, they are completely separate processes. Beginning in 2017, Amplify was requested in the Instructional Waiver process by several SPS schools to be used as an alternative to the current instructional materials adopted in 2001-2002. At this time, SPS Science had not yet been informed of the decision to proceed with an official science instructional materials adoption process for grades K-12 at all SPS schools. Amplify, like all other curriculum publishers, received the announcement from the SPS Purchasing Department of the Requests for Proposals (RFP). Amplify, along with 10 other publishers at grades K-5 and 9 other publishers at grades 6-8 submitted materials to be considered in the adoption process.

How did Amplify become a candidate in the science curriculum adoption process?

When the adoption process was made public, Amplify, along with 10 other publishers, submitted its materials to be considered as part of the process. The K-5 and 6-8 Adoption Committees then narrowed their choices of curricula to three candidates, which were then field tested in schools for two months. Based on the committees' evaluation of the three finalists' materials, and based on public input, and the field-tested materials' performance in classrooms, the Adoption Committee ultimately recommended Amplify for adoption at K-5 and 6-8, and CarbonTIME, PEER, and District-Developed Materials, at 9-12.

Did the SPS Science Program Manager have any relationship with Amplify prior to the start of the science curriculum adoption process that would constitute a conflict of interest?

The SPS Science Manager does not, and has not, had any relationship with Amplify. Further, the Science Program Manager does not select which curriculum publishers submit materials for review by the Adoption Committee; potential candidates must go through the SPS Purchasing Dept. The Science Program Manager is not an actual

member of the Adoption Committee and does not evaluate materials submitted for review, nor does the Science Program Manager vote on whether to advance an adoption candidate to the next round of consideration by the School Board.

Is Amplify being used in other districts?

Regionally, Amplify has been adopted in Bellevue, Bethel, Edmonds, Puyallup, Sumner-Bonney Lake, Yelm, as well as Hillsboro, Sherwood, and Bend, Oregon. Nationally, Amplify has been adopted in New York City Public Schools, San Francisco Unified, Denver Public Schools, Chicago Public Schools, Madison, Wisconsin, and approved for adoption by all districts within the state of California.

Has Amplify been evaluated for standards-alignment and educational effectiveness by a third party?

Amplify for grades 6-8 has recently been rated as “fully-aligned” by EdReports. Amplify for grades 6–8 is the only middle school science program to receive EdReports’ highest ranking, indicating that a curriculum meets expectations for every category of the EdReports review system for science programs in grades 6–8. EdReports has not yet conducted an evaluation of K-5 science materials programs. View the report here: <https://www.edreports.org/resources/article/edreports-breaks-new-ground-with-inaugural-science-reviews>

Does Amplify require students to use computers excessively? Are there any hands-on activities?

Amplify blends hands-on investigations, literacy activities, and interactive digital tools to allow students to think, read, write, and support claim from evidence like real scientists and engineers. This is common among science instructional programs developed for alignment to the Next Generation Science Standards, and all of the instructional materials candidate programs that were field-tested as part of the K-5 and 6-8 science adoption process included interactive technology as part of the lesson activities.

At elementary, the technology component of Amplify is largely teacher-based, however there are opportunities for students to work together in pairs to use digital tools, such as scaling tools, modeling tools, and simulations. In Amplify at grades K-1, students do not use computers at all. At grades 2-3 the use of student devices is limited to approximately 2% of the learning activities and progresses to approximately 10% at grades 4-5.

At grades 6-8, students may directly access the online portal, however the classroom teacher is still responsible for instructing the lesson and motivating each learning activity within the lesson. The students are more engaged with digital learning tools, such as modeling tools and simulations, than at elementary, however computer-based activities comprise approximately 15% of the learning activities in each unit. All other learning activities can be conducted offline.

What curriculum is currently being used in non-Amplify schools?

K-5 schools, as well as the middle schools that did not apply for the instructional waiver to use Amplify, are currently provided with the adopted science materials from 1996 and 2002, respectively.

The previous science adoption at K-5 and 6-8 was not a single comprehensive program; unit titles were purchased from the three different vendors included in the adoption: STC (Science and Technology Corporation), FOSS (Full Option Science System), and Lab-Aids by SEPUP (Science Education for Public Understanding). This “piecemeal” adoption resulted in a unit scope and sequence that includes both redundancies and content gaps. Further, because of their age, the text-based resources are outdated and/or inaccurate. As a result, many schools have opted, independently and informally, to purchase supplement or replacement materials using PTSA or building-based funds, therefore there is a high degree of variability in the science materials being used across the district.